

**CITY OF SAN ANTONIO**  
**Planning and Development Services Department**  
**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** PDSD Associates

**FROM:** Roderick Sanchez, AICP, CBO, Director and Building Official

**DATE:** March 17, 2009  
May 13, 2009 (Revised)

**FILE:** Code Interpretation Manual

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**INTERPRETATION NUMBER:** CI2009-001

**TITLE:** Metal Clad (MC) Cable exterior color-coding identification

**CODE EDITION:** National Electrical Code (NEC) (2008); Chapter 10 City Code

**SECTION:** Article 330 (NEC) and Article XIV Section 10-1403.1 (20) Chapter 10 City Code

**PURPOSE:** To outline requirements for identification of the exterior armor of MC Cable in specific types of installations.

**QUESTION:** Does MC Cable have to be color-coded blue on the exterior when manufacturer's are able to provide other permanent means of exterior identification that will meet the same intent of making it easily identifiable to the field inspector during his inspection?

**ANSWER:** No. Chapter 10 City Code Article XIV, Section 10-1403.1 (20) does state that the exterior armor of type MC Cable be color-coded blue by the manufacturer on its entire length when used with branch circuits.

The blue color indicated in Chapter 10 City Code was introduced as code language for the exact purpose of helping inspectors distinguish it from other metallic sheathed cables that closely resemble one another. The following are examples of MC Cable products that would meet the intent of our adopted codes and therefore not be required to have the exterior color coding of blue.

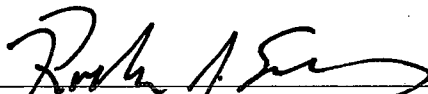
Type MC Cable listed for direct burial, concrete encasement, or use in wet locations is not required to have a blue finish since the color on the exterior nylon jacket makes it easily distinguishable to the inspectors. The product needs to be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and its listed purpose and meet the other requirements found in Chapter 10 when used for branch circuit wiring.

Type MC Cable that is listed for use in healthcare facilities is identified with a green color on its exterior by the manufacturer's to distinguish it from other types of MC Cable products and therefore also not required to have a blue finish when used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and its listed purpose and meets all applicable requirements of Chapter 10 when used for branch circuit wiring.

In addition, we recognize that other types of MC Cable products may be introduced into the marketplace that will incorporate some similar form of permanent exterior identification. These products will need to be evaluated for meeting the same intent of being easily distinguishable by the field inspectors.

It will be up to that manufacturer to introduce their product to our department for evaluation and for a determination on whether or not it will suffice for meeting this intent. Once the product is approved, the inspectors and plan reviewers will be made aware thus allowing for a smooth transition of the product into our market place. Keep in mind that all other requirements of Chapter 10 City Code for MC Cable used with branch circuits will apply.

Contact the Chief Electrical Inspector at (210) 207-8286 [ray.martinez@sanantonio.gov](mailto:ray.martinez@sanantonio.gov) for more information.



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